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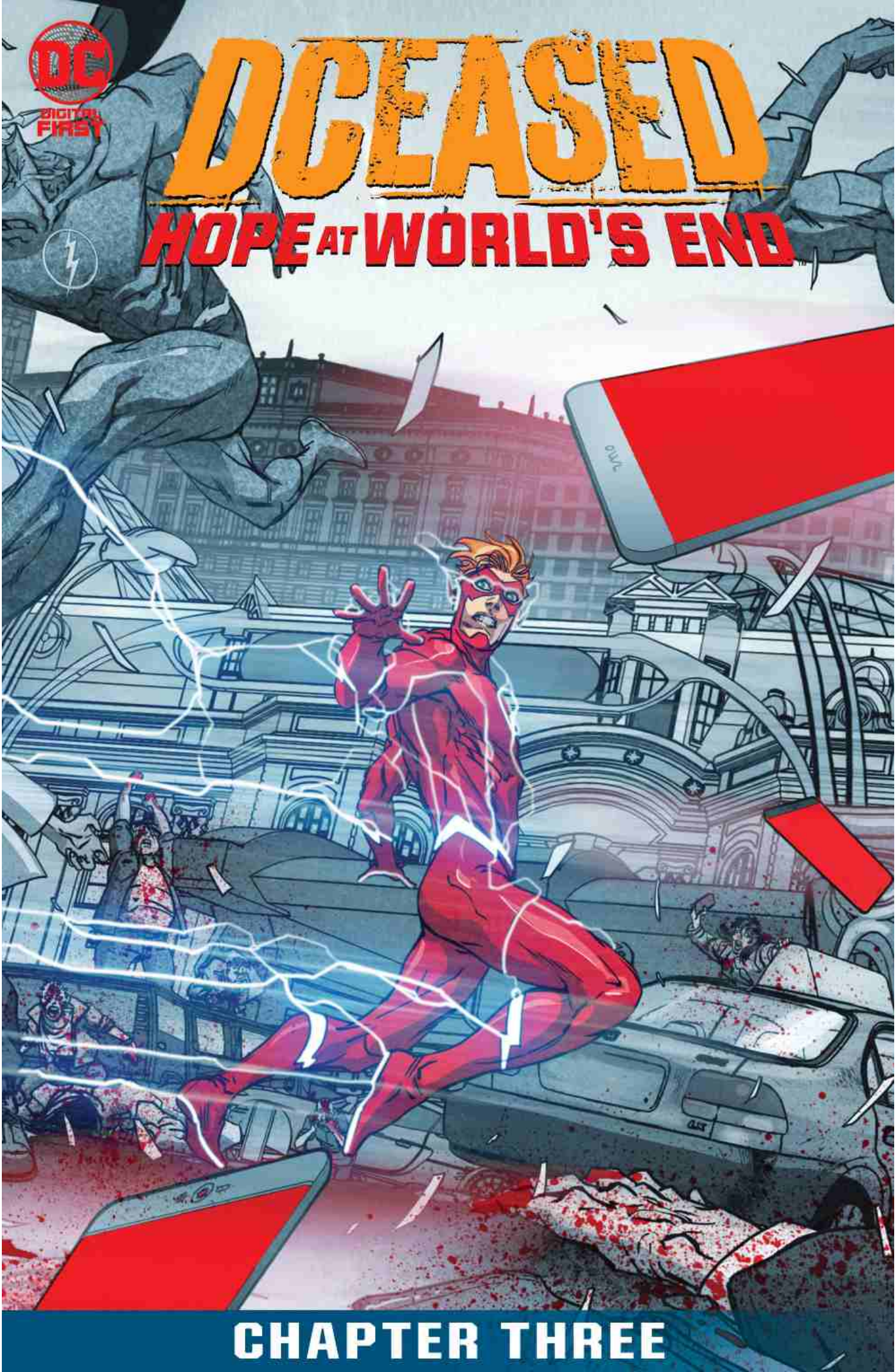
DC
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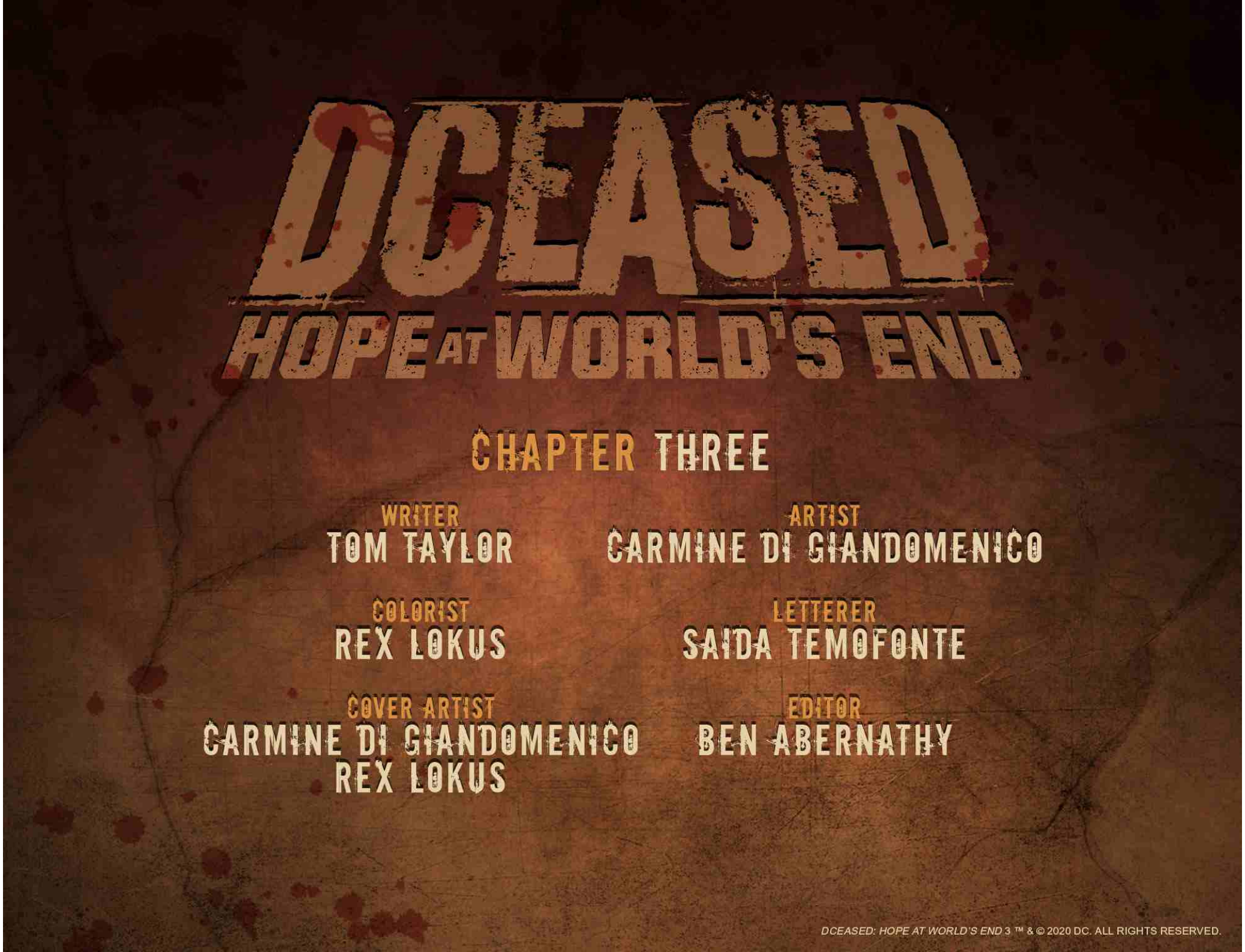
HOPE AT WORLD'S END
CHAPTER THREE



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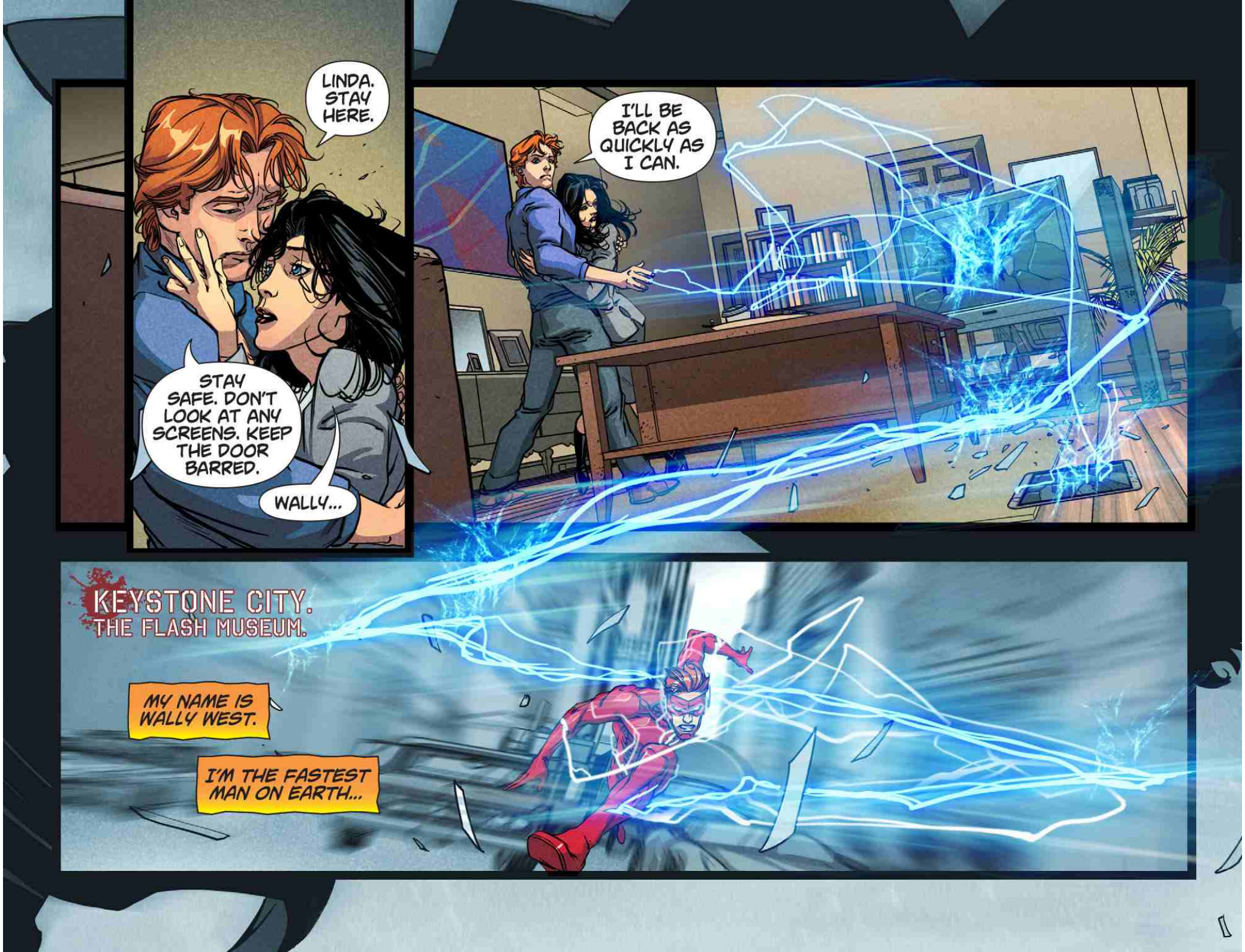
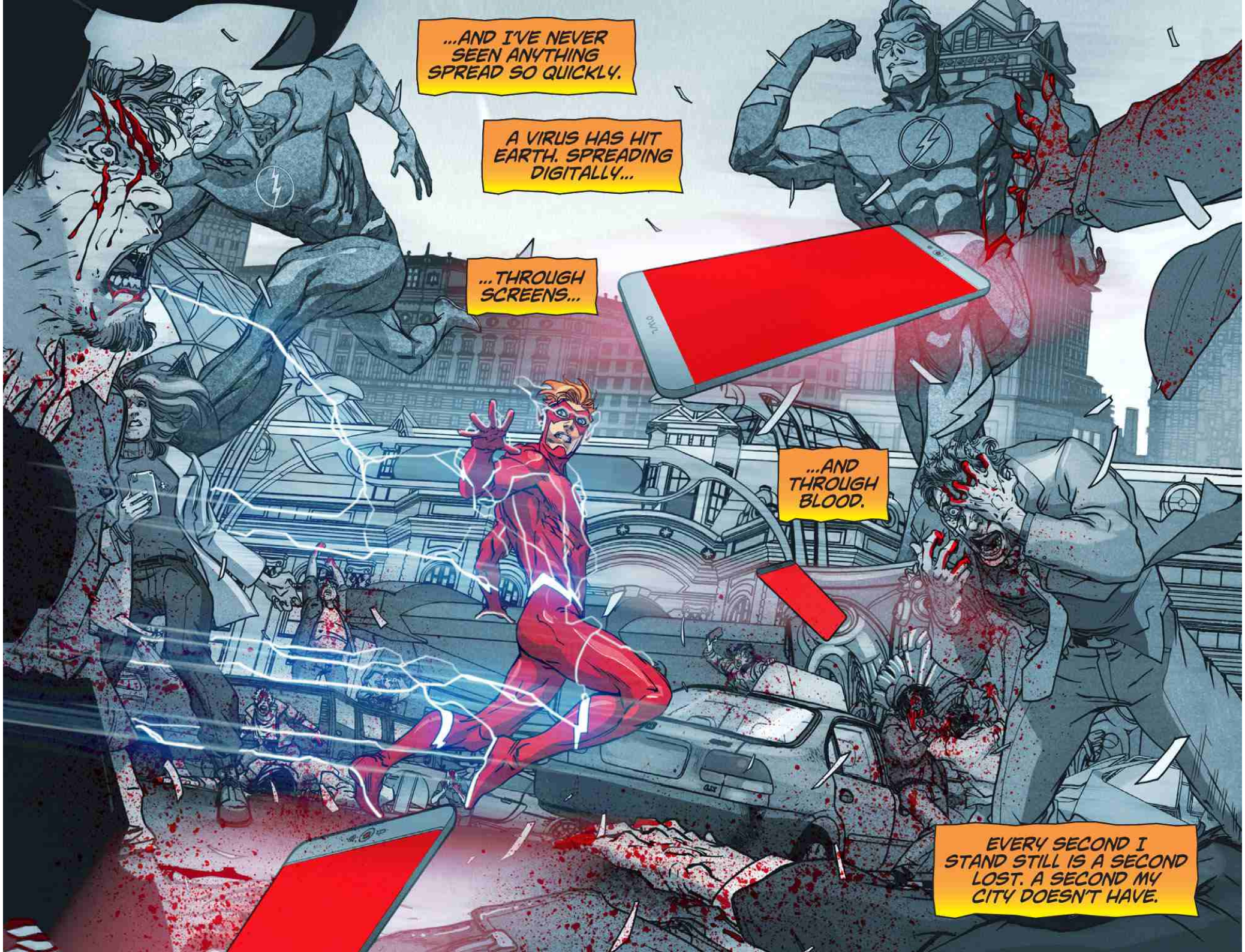
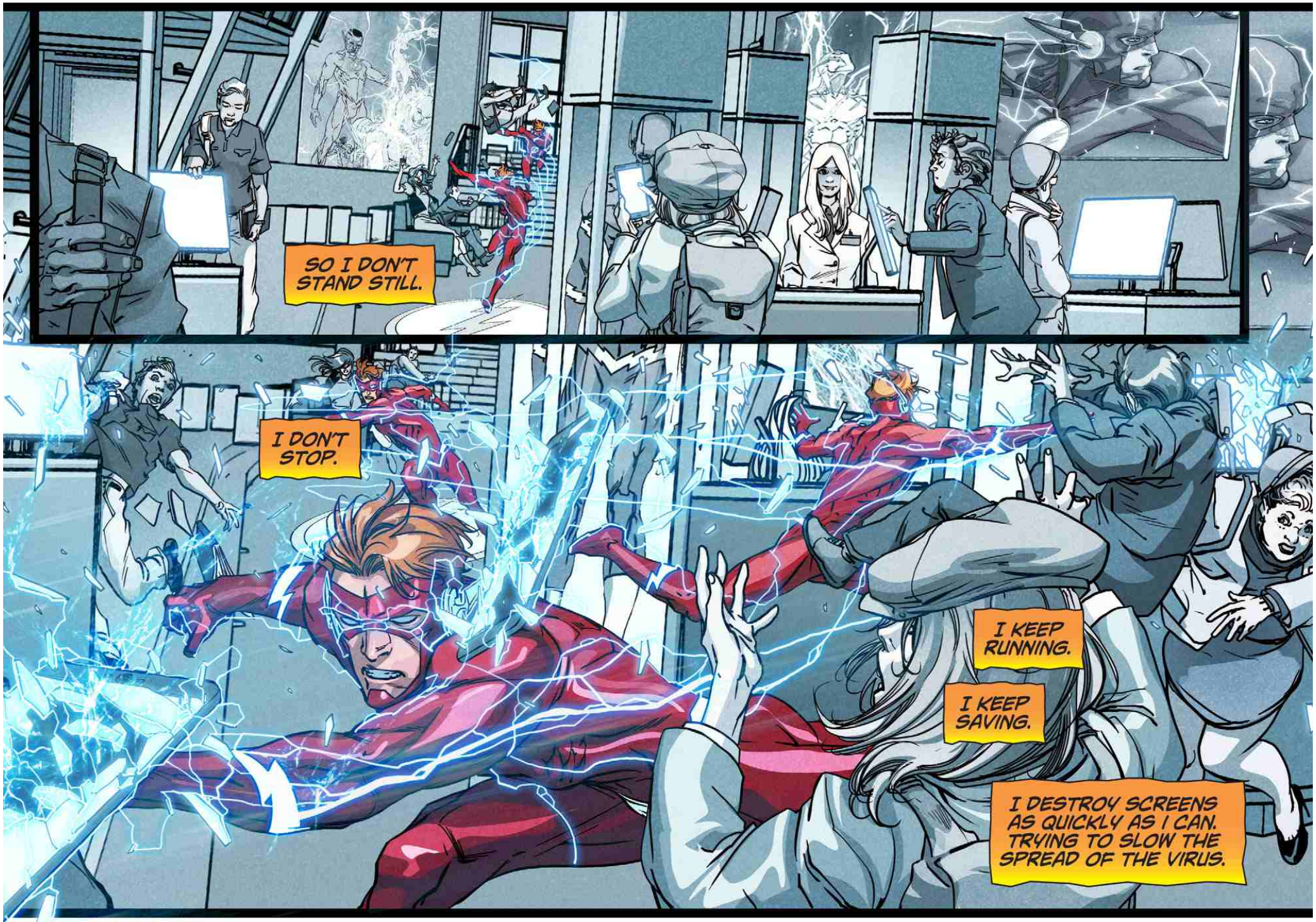
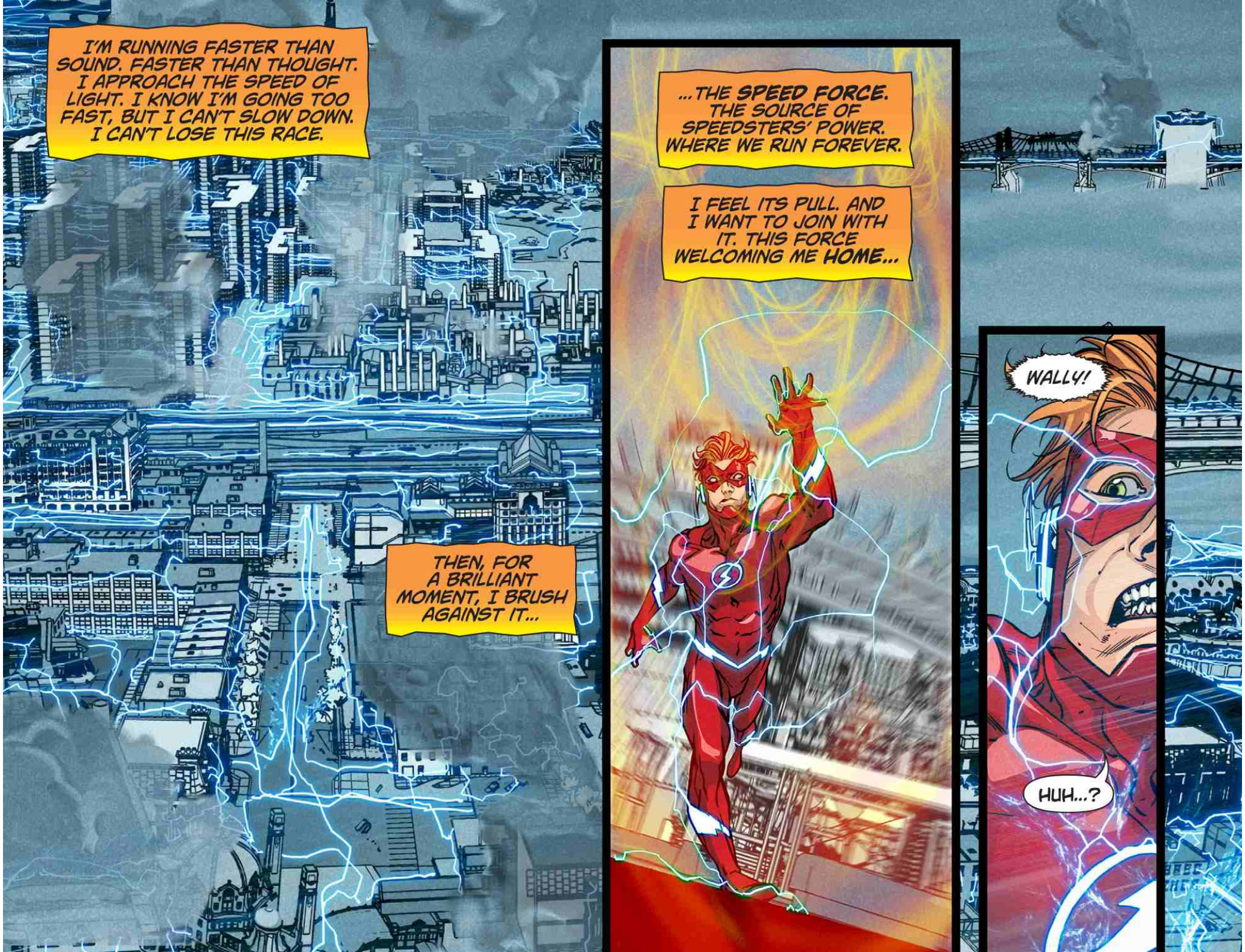
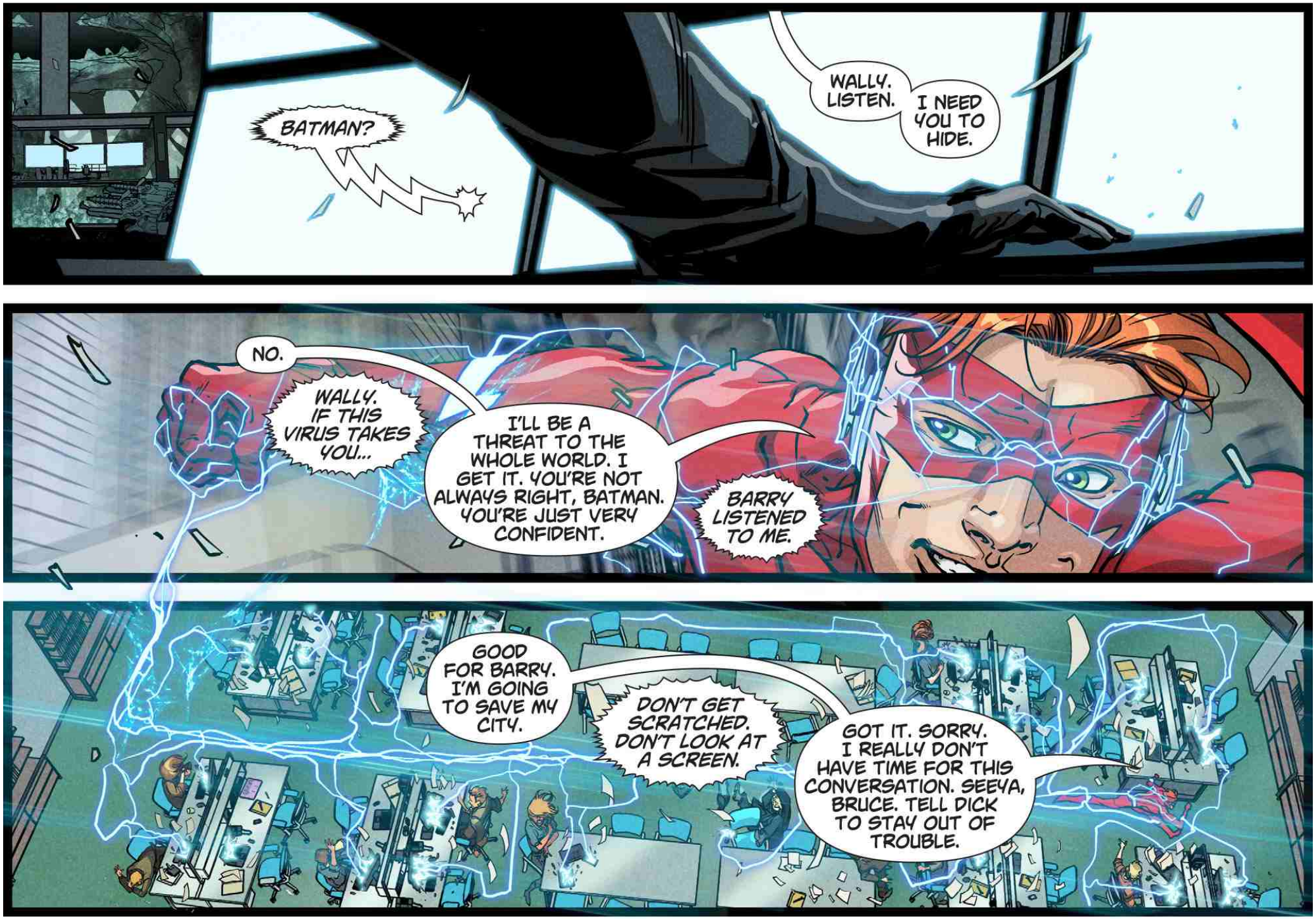

LINDA. STAY HERE.
STAY SAFE. DON'T LOOK AT ANY SCREENS. KEEP THE DOOR BARRED.
WALLY...
I'LL BE BACK AS QUICKLY AS I CAN.
KEYSTONE CITY.
THE FLASH MUSEUM.
MY NAME IS WALLY WEST.
I'M THE FASTEST MAN ON EARTH...


...AND I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING SPREAD SO QUICKLY.
A VIRUS HAS HIT EARTH. SPREADING DIGITALLY...
...THROUGH SCREENS...
...AND THROUGH BLOOD.
EVERY SECOND I STAND STILL IS A SECOND LOST. A SECOND MY CITY DOESN'T HAVE.


SO I DON'T STAND STILL.
I DON'T STOP.
I KEEP RUNNING.
I KEEP SAVING.
I DESTROY SCREENS AS QUICKLY AS I CAN. TRYING TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS.

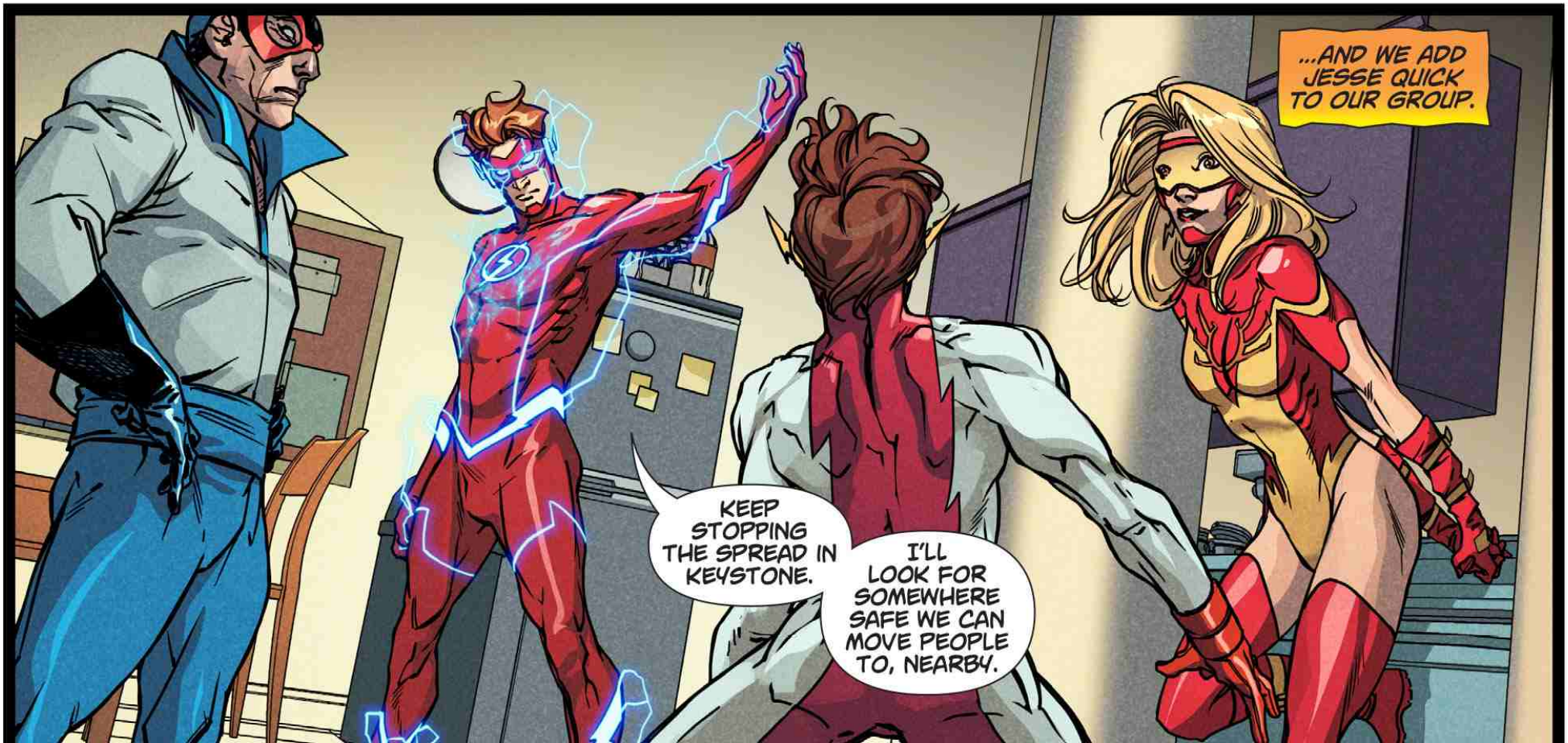

I'M RUNNING FASTER THAN SOUND. FASTER THAN THOUGHT. I APPROACH THE SPEED OF LIGHT. I KNOW I'M GOING TOO FAST, BUT I CAN'T SLOW DOWN. I CAN'T LOSE THIS RACE.
THEN, FOR A BRILLIANT MOMENT, I BRUSH AGAINST IT...
...THE SPEED FORCE. THE SOURCE OF SPEEDSTERS' POWER. WHERE WE RUN FOREVER.
I FEEL ITS PULL. AND I WANT TO JOIN WITH IT. THIS FORCE WELCOMING ME HOME...
WALLY!
HUH...?


BATMAN?
WALLY. LISTEN.
I NEED YOU TO HIDE.
NO.
WALLY. IF THIS VIRUS TAKES YOU...
I'LL BE A THREAT TO THE WHOLE WORLD. I GET IT. YOU'RE NOT ALWAYS RIGHT, BATMAN. YOU'RE JUST VERY CONFIDENT.
BARRY LISTENED TO ME.
GOOD FOR BARRY. I'M GOING TO SAVE MY CITY.
DON'T GET SCRATCHED. DON'T LOOK AT A SCREEN.
GOT IT. SORRY. I REALLY DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS CONVERSATION. SEEYA, BRUCE. TELL DICK TO STAY OUT OF TROUBLE.

GOODBYE, WALLY.
GODSPEED.
I'M NOT FAST ENOUGH.
I CAN SLOW THE SPREAD. BUT I CAN'T BE IN MORE THAN ONE PLACE.
YES I CAN.

BART.
YEAH, MAX?
CAN YOU NOT HEAR THE NEIGHBORS SCREAMING?
UH-HUH. MR. PETERSON INSISTED HE COULD PUT SOME SHELVES TOGETHER WITHOUT THE INSTRUCTIONS. IT WAS NEVER GONNA END WELL.
IT SOUNDS A LITTLE MORE INTENSE THAN SCANDINAVIAN FURNITURE BUILDING.
I'LL CHECK STRAIGHT AFTER THIS GAME.
WALLY? NOOO! NOT THE TV!
CRSSSH

IT TAKES LESS THAN A PICOSECOND TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO IMPULSE AND MAX MERCURY.
IT WOULD BE FASTER, BUT BART INTERRUPTS SEVERAL TIMES WITH "EXPERT ZOMBIE KNOWLEDGE."
A QUARTER OF A SECOND LATER...


...AND WE ADD JESSE QUICK TO OUR GROUP.
KEEP STOPPING THE SPREAD IN KEYSTONE.
I'LL LOOK FOR SOMEWHERE SAFE WE CAN MOVE PEOPLE TO, NEARBY.

BUT EVERYWHERE I LOOK IS THE SAME.
CENTRAL CITY.

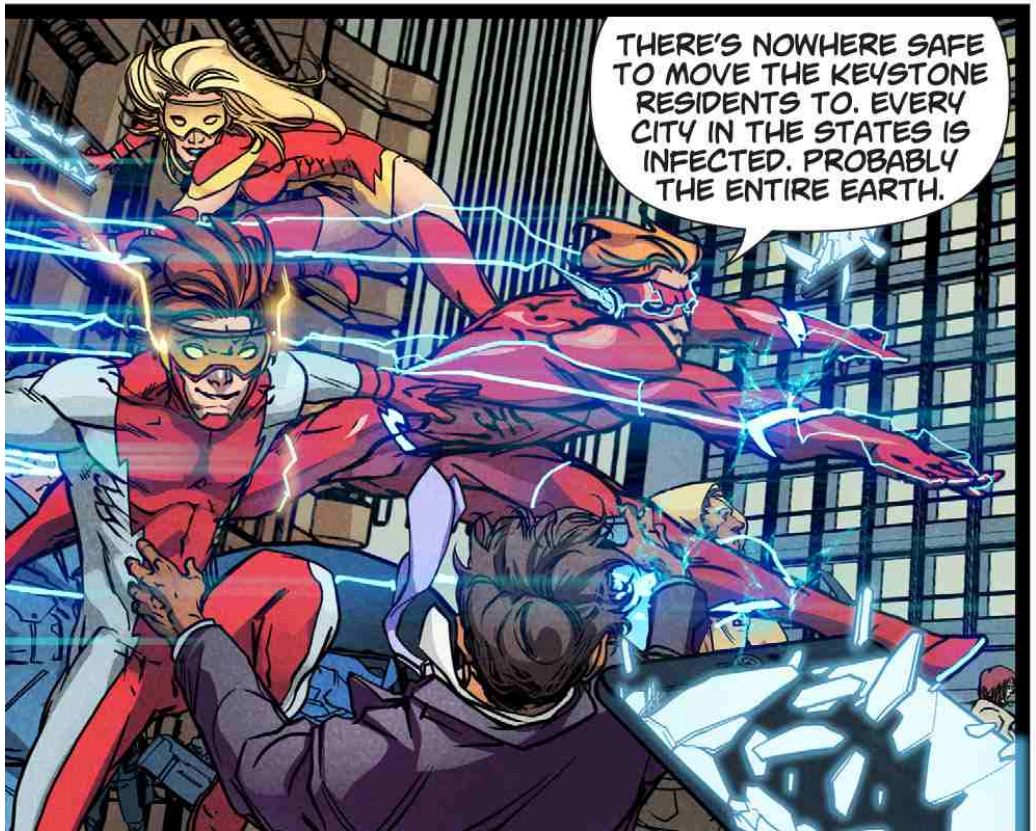
HUH?

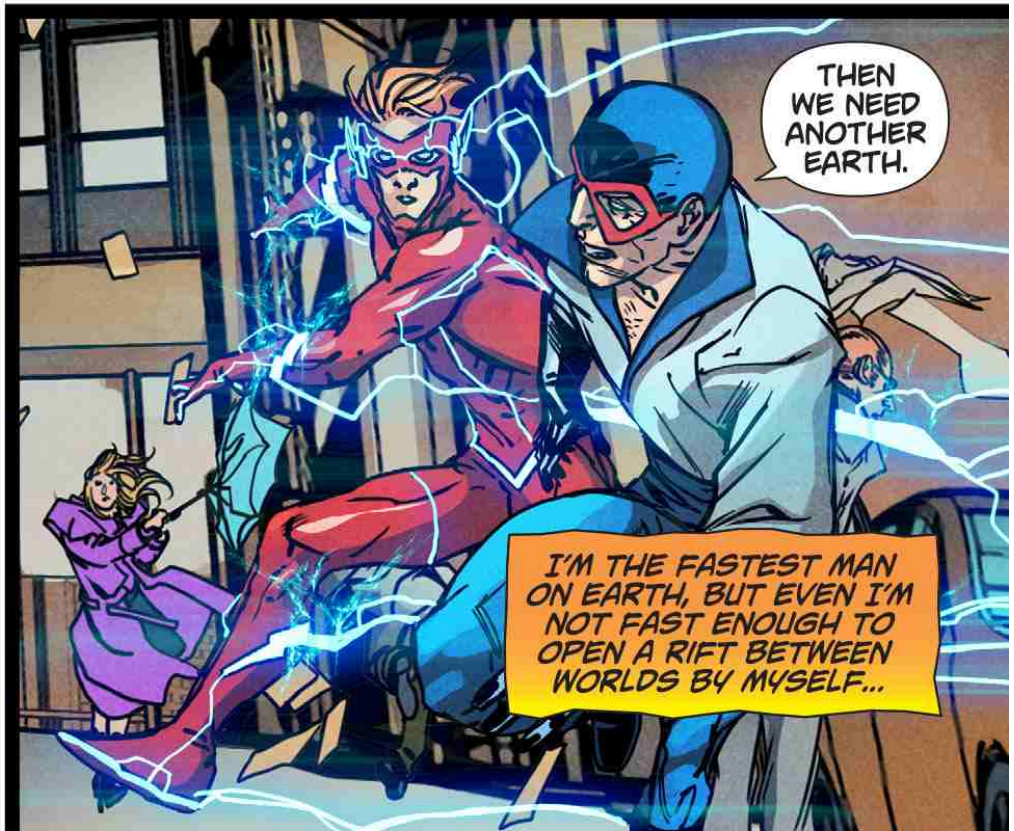
NEW YORK.

WHAT THE--?

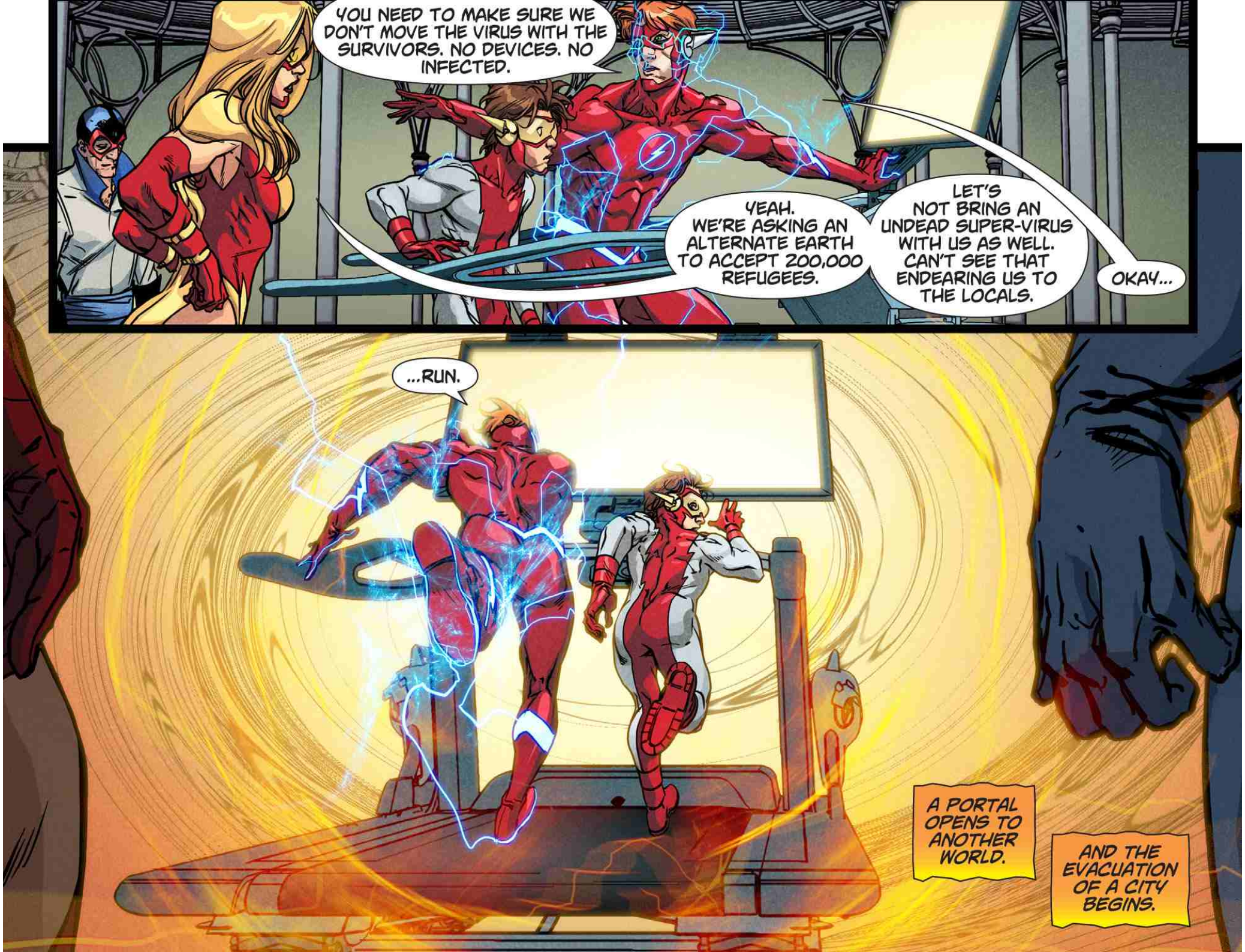
GOTHAM.

DID YOU HEAR SOMEONE?
YAY! ARE YOU HEARING VOICES, RED? I HOPE YOUR VOICES ARE NICER THAN MINE!


THERE'S NOWHERE SAFE TO MOVE THE KEYSTONE RESIDENTS TO. EVERY CITY IN THE STATES IS INFECTED. PROBABLY THE ENTIRE EARTH.


THEN WE NEED ANOTHER EARTH.
I'M THE FASTEST MAN ON EARTH, BUT EVEN I'M NOT FAST ENOUGH TO OPEN A RIFT BETWEEN WORLDS BY MYSELF...

...THAT TAKES TWO.
THE TANDEM COSMIC TREADMILL. JAY AND BARRY ONCE USED THIS TO OPEN A HOLE IN SPACE.
THIS IS OUR BEST OPTION FOR KEYSTONE.
YOU AND BART ARE FASTER THAN US, WALLY.
YOU'RE GOING TO RUN, AT TOP SPEED, TO OPEN AN EXIT FROM THIS WORLD TO ANOTHER, AND KEEP GOING LONG ENOUGH FOR MAX AND ME TO EVACUATE 200,000 PEOPLE THROUGH IT.
SO, YOU'RE GOING TO BE OUT THERE, BATTLING ZOMBIES, WHILE I JUST...RUN IN A STRAIGHT LINE?
YES.
BUT, YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, YOU'RE NOT AS FAST AS ME. I SHOULD BE OUT THERE.
IT'S THE ONLY WAY THIS CAN WORK, BART.


YOU NEED TO MAKE SURE WE DON'T MOVE THE VIRUS WITH THE SURVIVORS. NO DEVICES. NO INFECTED.
YEAH. WE'RE ASKING AN ALTERNATE EARTH TO ACCEPT 200,000 REFUGEES.
LET'S NOT BRING AN UNDEAD SUPER-VIRUS WITH US AS WELL. CAN'T SEE THAT ENDEARING US TO THE LOCALS.
OKAY...
...RUN.
A PORTAL OPENS TO ANOTHER WORLD.
AND THE EVACUATION OF A CITY BEGINS.

LINDA IS ONE OF THE FIRST TO GO THROUGH.
I MAKE A MENTAL NOTE TO GIVE MAX A VERY BIG HUG ONCE THIS IS OVER.
TWELVE MINUTES LATER, 146,000 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CARRIED TO SAFETY. TWELVE MINUTES...
...IT FEELS LIKE FOREVER.
THE SPEED WE HAVE TO MAINTAIN. THE CONCENTRATION.
KNOWING IF WE SLOW DOWN, OUR ESCAPE IS GONE.
THAT'S THE LAST OF THEM.
YOU TWO, GET YOUR BUTTS--

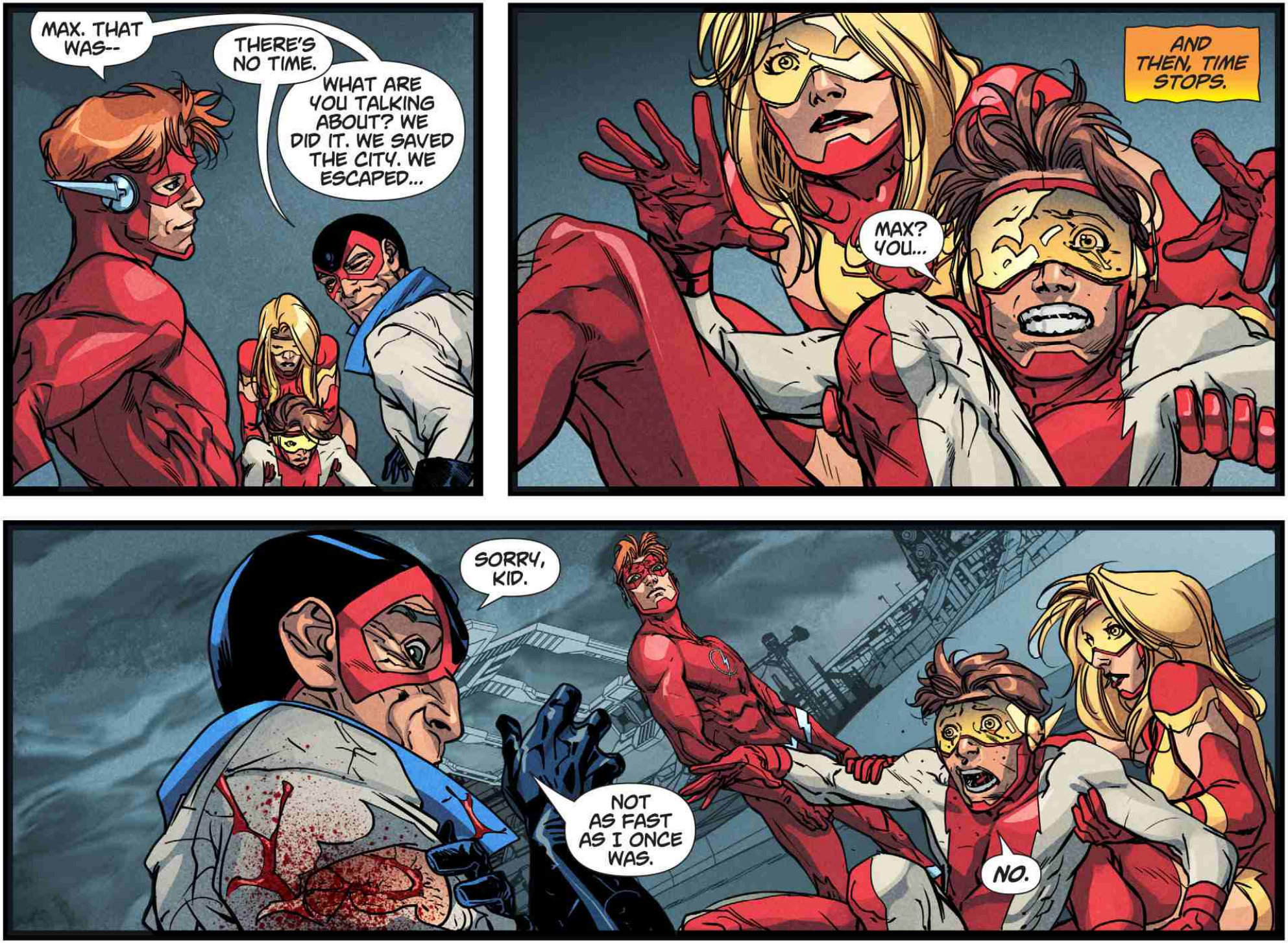
THEN IT HAPPENS.
BART COLLAPSES.

BART!
THOOM

KEEP RUNNING. I'LL GET HIM!
KEEP IT OPEN!

MAX?
DAMN IT.

I CAN'T DO IT.
NOT ALONE.
MY LUNGS ARE ON FIRE. MY HEART IS BEATING IN MY BRAIN. I CAN'T KEEP THE DOORWAY OPEN ANY LONGER.
I'M FALLING.
I'M--
WALLY!
WITH THE SPEED OF MERCURY, WE BURST THROUGH TO ANOTHER WORLD.


MAX. THAT WAS--
THERE'S NO TIME.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WE DID IT. WE SAVED THE CITY. WE ESCAPED...
AND THEN, TIME STOPS.
MAX? YOU...
SORRY, KID.
NOT AS FAST AS I ONCE WAS.
NO.

MY MIND IS RACING. A MILLION IDEAS ARE DISCARDED.
I CAN FEEL IT COMING, WALLY.
YOU KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.
MAX! PLEASE...
I CAN FEEL IT CRAWLING THROUGH MY BODY.
NOTHING I THINK OF SAVES MAX.
YOU HAVE TO END ME. NOW.
NOTHING EXCEPT...

...WE CAN'T SAVE MAX'S LIFE...
GOODBYE, BART. I LOVE YOU. BE GOOD.
...BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE HAVE TO LOSE HIM TO THIS DAMN THING.
WE TRANSFER SOME OF OUR SPEED TO MAX...
...AND WE RUN.
WE RUN THROUGH SOUND.
WE RUN THROUGH LIGHT.
WE RUN INTO SILENCE AND CALM.
AND MAX IS STILL RUNNING.
MAX MERCURY ENTERS THE SPEED FORCE. I SEE HIM SMILE AND THEN...
THANK YOU, WALLY.
...HE'S GONE.
A STREAK OF BLUE. OUTPACING PAIN. OUTPACING DEATH.

RUNNING FOREVER.
HOME.
NEXT: THE COMING STORM.

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE

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#ConnectedTogether

Art by Tony S. Daniel / Colors by Tomeu Morey

ZONE